

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HAMBUR 00036 151531Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT GW

SUBJECT: ELECTION OF ERNST ALBRECHT AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT

OF LOWER SAXONY

1. IT HAS BEEN NO SECRET IN HANNOVER FOR THE PAST YEAR
THAT SPD MINISTER-PRESIDENT ALFRED KUBEL OF LOWER SAXONY
HAS BEGUN TO FEEL HIS 67 YEARS AND HAS BEEN AWAITING A
PROPITIOUS TIME TO STEP ASIDE SO AS TO ALLOW A YOUNGER
MAN TO ASSUME THE OFFICE OF MINISTER-PRESIDENT OF LAND
NIEDERSACHSEN. KUBEL, A MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATIVE WING
OF THE SPD, HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE MINISTER-PRESIDENT AND
DURING HIS TENURE SINCE 1970 HAS ENJOYED EXCELLENT WORKING
RELATIONS WITH THE MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES BASED IN LOWER
SAXONY.

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PAGE 02 HAMBUR 00036 151531Z

2. IN MAY 1975 KUBEL FORMALLY ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO

RETIRE SOMETIME AT THE BEGINNING OF 1976 AND ON JANUARY 7, 1976 TENDERED HIS RESIGNATION TO BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 14. AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE LANDTAG IN HANNOVER ON JANUARY 14 HELMUT KASIMIER, SPD, THE 49-YEAR OLD MINISTER OF FINANCE, WHO WAS THE SPD/FDP COALITION CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED KUBEL FAILED TO RECEIVE THE 78 VOTE MAJORITY NECESSARY FOR HIS ELECTION AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT (76 SPD, 11 FDP, 77 CDU - 155 LANDTAG DEPUTIES). THREE DEPUTIES WHOSE IDENTITY IS UNKNOWN BECAUSE OF THE SECRET BALLOT, CAST VOID BALLOTS.

3. ON JANUARY 15, AT A SECOND ELECTION, ERNST ALBRECHT, A 45-YEAR OLD CDU LANDTAG DEPUTY WHO RAN AGAINST KASIMIER RECEIVED THE UNEXPECTED SUPPORT OF ONE MEMBER OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION AND DEFEATED KASIMIER IN A STUNNING UPSET.

4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS DRAMATIC ELECTORAL VICTORY FOR THE CDU IN LOWER SAXONY IS THAT IT CHANGES THE COMPOSITION OF THE BUNDESRAT. THE CDU WILL NOW RECEIVE 5 ADDITIONAL SEATS, THEREBY WIDENING ITS GAP IN THE BUNDESRAT TO 26 SEATS FOR THE CDU AS AGAINST 15 SEATS FOR THE SPD/FDP MINORITY IN THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT.

5. AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY I WILL BE MEETING WITH ALBRECHT AND WILL THEN REPORT HIS VIEWS ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING THE FORTHCOMING OCTOBER 1976 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY. BROGAN

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